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A FEW FIELD NOTES

January 5, 1935

The J. C. Robinson Seed Company

Established 1888

Main Office: Waterloo, Nebr.

BRANCHES: ROCKY FORD, COLO. MODESTO, CALIF.

A FEW FIELD NOTES

By Lawrence R. Robinson

The writer, after some seven or eight weeks this fall inspecting our seed crops, has made some observations that may be of interest to seedsmen.

With the generally poor condition of crops this year it was difficult to secure adequate photos, yet we have albums that might be interesting. Sent upon request.

CUCUMBER

We are more enthused than ever over our new cucumber, The Colorado. It is the finest white spine grown, of just the right size and length. Most cucumbers of this type are not prolific, nor are they extra early. Colorado will yield more slicing cucumbers earlier than any variety of approximately its size. Careful trials this summer of the Colorado as compared to others have convinced us that this variety is bound to displace most other varieties. Its dark green color is nearly as good as are greenhouse forcing varieties. By all means list this best introduction in recent years. It deserved fully receiving the all-America award of merit.

National Pickle in trials showed up very well in comparison with other older varieties. I would almost state that it is more uniform and symmetrical than some of the older varieties while it is fully as early and as prolific.

Davis Perfect has been slowly losing ground, being displaced by Early Fortune and Woodruff's Hybrid. Our observations this fall lead us to believe, however, that Davis Perfect still is one of the best. The fruits are quite slender, with no tendency to thicken as do some of the others.

Early Russian, I have always thought, should be listed by everyone. No pickling cucumber approaches it for earliness. Often Early Russian will mature a crop before dry weather or extreme heat arrives, whereas with later varieties the crop might be a failure.

Vaughan continues to increase in popularity. I will repeat, however, that very favorable soil and weather conditions are necessary for perfect fruits.

The Lemons, white and yellow, deserve wider use. They are grown successfully where other varieties fail. They are the sweetest in taste of any cucumbers.

MUSKMELON

The Imperial Canteloupe deserved to the utmost, receiving the all-America award of merit. For long keeping qualities after being fully vine ripened, it has no superior. Its extremely small seed cavity enables it to withstand rough handling and long distance shipping. better perhaps than any other canteloupe. It deserves being listed by every seedsman.

The Golden Rind Honey Dew is another valuable new variety. Similar in all ways to the regular Honey Dew, except the rind is colored a rich orange, making it very distinctive and attractive.

There are an increasing number of mildew-resistant strains of canteloupes and also a resistant Honey Dew. They are of the utmost value in mildew sections of the country. The quality and uniformity of these new strains are not thoroughly fixed as yet, but doubtless they will prove popular. No. 50 and No. 15-50 Hales Best are the two most widely used.

Hales Best continues to be the best seller. Some sections of the country are wanting a larger Hales Best, similar to the original type. Larger canteloupes seem to be what is wanted. There are some strains of Hales Best not much larger than Perfecto and Pollack 10-25—and fully

as well netted. However, earliness has been sacrificed to some extent by the increased netting.

If it were possible to grow the Persian and Casaba melons in other states than California and Arizona they certainly would be valuable additions. Being long keeping (until December at least) then would have a great popularity. Excessive humidity seems fatal to their growth.

Melons of the Bender's Surprise type continue to displace the older varieties. Bender's Surprise has a remarkably strong rind, thick flesh, and is well netted and early. It will also produce as many fruits as any other Muskmelon. The quality is very fine. Its popularity has increased at the expense of varieties like Tip Top, Osage, etc.

WATERMELON

The Agricultural College of the University of California is doing some fine work in adding wilt resistance to several important watermelon varieties; notably Klondike. Wilt is more common and prevalent than is generally supposed and is responsible for more trouble in raising watermelons than any other one thing. Pride of Muscatine continues to be the best resistant variety so far.

The Red Seeded Striped Wichita or Hutchinson watermelon, which also has other names, is one of the finest melons for quality that we have grown. Somewhat oblong, striped very distinctly it is early, prolific and of remarkable quality. It has displaced even Stone Mountain in many sections. It is not particularly attractive in outside appearance but its wonderful quality certainly is of the best.

Dixie Queen has small white seed, oblong in shape, fair size with vivid striping, mostly a light green. It is the closest approach to a "seedless" watermelon we have grown. The rind seems very brittle and we question whether it will stand much shipping.

It seems too bad that the various types of Klondike are not adapted to the east and south of this country. I have never observed melons that so fully meet the approval of eye and taste as do Klondike. They are not only handsome outwardly, but more so when cut, and no other melon approaches them for edible qualities.

Improved Kleckley's Sweet to the writer seems almost a perfect melon for all sections. I can not see any way in which it can be improved. It has the earliness, size and quality that should fill every need. The only criticism, if there is any criticism, is the extremely large size to which they grow. The average housewife can not, as a rule, use one. This means the retailer must sell halves which is not very efficient.

SQUASH

Squaggetti is a novel introduction. When cooked the flesh separates into strings quite similar to spaghetti—the quality is quite good too. Probably will remain an interesting novelty.

The two strains of Banana Squash—blue and pink—should be listed by every seedsman. I am convinced that they are more or less “bug proof”—we have observed Banana growing in fine shape, when all other winter types were complete failures. To the uninitiated the shape of them may appear awkward but the edible qualities and their ability to always “produce” outweigh any disadvantage as to shape or size.

Buttercup will likely remain a novelty. The quality is fine, but to the writer its outside appearance does not attract.

Bennings Green Tinted Scallop continues to grow in popularity. The delicate green tint when edible is quite attractive.

Black Zucchini continues moderately popular. There is no advantage in this strain over the regular gray variety.

Golden Delicious squash is in my opinion about the handsomest of squashes. Its vivid orange color catches the eye and the quality, when cooked, superior to other winter types. It deserves listing by all seedsmen.

The smaller size of the Kitchenette or Baby Hubbard should increase its popularity. Most Hubbards due to large size do not appeal to the average housewife, while the size of Kitchenette is "just right."

We have now purified Table Queen to where there should be no complaints. It has had a tendency to "breed back," as indeed do all squashes. Table Queen needs improvement as regards having thicker flesh. A larger Table Queen might also be valuable.

The Sweet Potato Squash is likely to become confused with the Tennessee Sweet Potato Pumpkin. The Sweet Potato Squash is almost identical with the old Delicata with no particular merit. We did not observe that it had any particular quality that merits its wide use.

It seems strange that the Early Yellow Bush Scallop Squash does not increase in use; at least in proportion to Early White Bush Scallop. The Yellow Bush has a remarkably fine color, very attractive and it is equal in every way to the Early White Bush and to the writer superior in appearance.

The true Golden Custard Squash has no particular merit. We think it grows too large which means it is not very prolific and of course late.

The Extra Long Cocozelle Squash is inclined to produce curved fruits and nubbins in unfavorable weather. We believe the present type that is wanted really produces fruits too long. The shorter strain we think to be the most efficient. Some of the extra long Cocozelles this season produced fruits 24 inches in length and usually but one fruit to the plant, whereas the shorter type produces six or eight and usually all perfect fruits.

PUMPKIN

Estampes is an old variety, perhaps, and yet the writer was much impressed by the size and beautiful color of this variety this fall. Some that we produced weighed at least 100 pounds and standing out among the dark green leaves were indeed a striking sight.

We have never considered Large Cheese the same as Kentucky Field although many so list them. Large Cheese is likely as heavy a yielder as any pumpkin. It seems resistant to unfavorable soil and weather conditions and also insects do not bother it. Its edible quality certainly is of the highest. We grow only the true Cheese Pumpkin and our stock is extremely pure.

There really have been no recent pumpkin introductions, nor do I have any observations of interest, except the above.

Respectfully,

THE J. C. ROBINSON SEED COMPANY

MAIN OFFICE: WATERLOO, NEBR.

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ESTABLISHED 1888